

# Christian Community

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## THERE ARE EVILS TO BE FOUGHT

Peter Marshall once told a group of fellow ministers in Washington that among the hymns he could not sing was a favorite in many churches: "Onward Christian Soldiers." This hymn, he said, is not realistic. It leads us to sing, "Onward Christian Soldiers, marching as to war," when, as a matter of fact most Christians aren't willing to discipline themselves to be Christian soldiers! And they aren't marching to war against anything! They ought to be, and the church on earth should be the church militant, at war against evil, and fighting for those things which will bring abundant life to more of God's children.

Any daily newspaper will supply abundant evidence that all is not well in the communities where Christians live, and that there are evils for Christian soldiers to fight. Police blotters will tell of arrests made for various offenses against society, offenses ranging from minor traffic violations to disorderly conduct, theft, assault and murder. Other offenses, like the exploitation of people who pay high rents for space in unsanitary slum dwellings, or political chicanery and corruption which affect the lives of thousands of people, or petty gambling in clubs and churches, or even the subtle forces of radio and TV advertising, and the disrupting influences of various programs in several forms of communication, do not lead to police action so readily. But these evils, too, need to have our attention.

### Recognizing the Problem

We are easily aroused against some evils. For example, church boards can usually be counted on to appeal to public officials when a dealer seeks to establish a liquor outlet in a building close to a church. But what efforts do we make to combat the whole problem of alcohol, which brings misery to millions of homes every year (it is estimated that there are 4,000,000 chronic alcoholics in the United States today), which is respon-

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## Pennsylvania Citizens Combat Crime

By Joseph M. Kim

In 1950, when the racket-controlled courts and law enforcement offices of Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, made headline feature stories in *Collier's* magazine, many people were shocked to discover that vice, corruption, favoritism and tyranny had become part of the accepted standards in politics in south-western Pennsylvania. At the same time it became evident that many ministers of the county, deeply concerned about the moral fiber of their communities, which were caught in the clutches of ruthless politicians, were ready to rally the forces of responsible citizens. They formed *Operation: Crusade* on December 6, 1950.

These men were convinced that it was necessary to "show the people the light, and they will find their way." They declared that the *Crusade's* goal was to be "government of the people, by the people, and for the people, under God"—instead of government of, by,

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And We Used to Take Him for Granted



Hutton, The Philadelphia Inquirer

## Michigan Churches Stop Bingo Bill

The value of organized attention to political issues was demonstrated by the churches of the state of Michigan in the Fall of 1954, when certain social organizations, clubs, and even some churches succeeded in having a referendum concerning legalized bingo placed on the election ballot. State police and firemen joined with these groups in asking the people of Michigan to legalize this form of gambling.

The Michigan State Council of Churches, however, registered its opposition to the proposed bingo legislation, and recommended that church members go to the polls and defeat it. Proponents of the measure were quite confident, boasting that they would win easily and that the referendum would give them a 6 to 1 victory. But they reckoned badly. A Christian citizens committee, headed by a Presbyterian minister, put on an intensive campaign. A fund of \$40,000 was raised, to be spent on radio and TV spot announcements and for the preparation and distribution of fliers. In contrast to the intensive but dignified approach of the church group was the advertising program of the advocates of bingo which, observers said, actually damaged their cause.

The chairman of the committee on Christian Social Action of the Michigan-Indiana Synod sent night letters to all ministers of the Evangelical and Reformed churches in Michigan, requesting that these be read to Sunday morning congregations.

When the votes were counted the bingo proposal was defeated by a 2 to 1 vote. Church leaders are aware that another test of church strength will come, and they hope that their people will be equal to it then.



## What Chance Corrective Legislation?

By Evelyn Glazier Henzel

"You can't legislate a state of mind" is a statement often made in legislative halls by those who would relax social controls under the pretext of preserving our so-called liberties. However, just as adolescents need the firm hand of guiding parents when they cannot control themselves, so many folks who constitute society need, for their own protection and for the protection of those whom they might affect, the restraining hand of the law.



Mrs. Henzel

It may appear to an average citizen that a legislator occupies an enviable position, both to introduce and to engineer the passage of protective or corrective legislation for the good of society. Admittedly it is relatively simple for a legislator to initiate legislation either on his own account, or at the request of interested citizens. But this is just the beginning of the battle. Many people, including many members of Protestant churches, tend to rationalize their own weaknesses of behaviour in the light of what society chooses to make acceptable, rather than by the standards of Christian teaching. Thus support of corrective legislation frequently does not come from the constituents of a lawmaker who earnestly tries to maintain the concepts that have helped to make our country great.

Special interests, which would be harmed by controlling legislation, raise their voices high above the small cries of those who are conscious of their duty to their fellow men. And let us not deceive ourselves. Too many representatives of the people have no convictions beyond those which will work to their benefit when election time rolls around.

Exactly how do anti-corrective or anti-protective forces make themselves felt? By acts of commission and of omission. A bill which aims to control the publication and distribution of obscene and unsavory comic books is killed in committee because the power of censorship and control is placed in the hands of a State Board of Censors, which, the United States Supreme Court says, is powerless to sit in such judgments. A similar kind of bill is defeated or retarded in passage because publishers

and printers scream "censorship." The liberalization of liquor laws, as, for example, to permit Sunday sale of liquor, and the legalization of gambling are put upon legislative books because the liquor industry is constantly lobbying for increased opportunities for business, because pari-mutual betting is a much less painful way to obtain state funds than taxes, and, *mark this*, because too few Christians are willing to speak out in opposition to that which conflicts with their neighbors' philosophy of "live and let live." Enabling legislation to appropriate money for schools, nursing services, and mental health, on any governmental level is stymied because such legislation necessitates higher taxes, and higher taxes endanger another term of office for many politicians. A bill for a much needed child care program lies buried because the Roman Catholic Church objects on the basis that it threatens the autonomy of the church and its children's institutions. These are a few of the roadblocks that constantly stand in the way of the legislator who frequently has to battle singlehandedly for what he thinks is right.

But you can help him in this encounter. You can register, and you can vote for those who crusade for lofty concepts. You can cease to be silent when you should speak out. You can write to your representatives in government, encourage their constructive efforts, and support them in times of difficulty. You are a citizen, you are a voter, but most important of all, you are a Christian, and you must operate as one.

Two study tours will give members of the Evangelical and Reformed Church opportunity to become better acquainted with the problems of the world in which we live and the efforts being put forth to solve them.

One of these is the National Missions Study Tour, which this year aims at securing a better understanding of the Indian Americans by visits to reservations, Indian Schools, and communities in which Indians are currently residing in large numbers. For information about this tour, leaving Chicago June 6 and ending at Milwaukee on June 20 in

## One Third Participate

How many congregations actually participated in the Emphasis on Christian Commitment and Christian Community, launched by the Evangelical and Reformed Church this past September and now in its sixth month? At the suggestion of the members of the Commission, a postcard survey of our pastors was made to ascertain the degree and nature of participation. Some interesting facts were discovered.

According to the yearbook we have 2,732 congregations grouped into 2,134 charges served by 1,874 pastors. 904 of these pastors, or nearly one-half, returned the simple postal card form. 573 charges reporting conducted an every-family visitation. 713 pastors used the suggested sermon topics in their Sunday services. 317 used the recommended study topics, while 305 planned other special programs on the purpose of the Emphasis. 6,292 copies of the Manual, 387 packets, and in total 198,299 pieces of literature had been distributed as of January 1, 1956.

This is far from one hundred per cent participation—and one synod established some sort of a record by not submitting a single reply! But the mere fact that one-third of our congregations followed this program—and a considerable number either adapted it to their local situation or planned to schedule the suggested activities later in the year—is a most encouraging evidence of the validity and timeliness of the undertaking. That the effort may bear fruit in the increased vitality and outreach of both congregations and members is the prayer of the three agencies which undertook it.

## Announce Study Tours

time for the Churchmen's Brotherhood Convention, write to George Buescher, Tour Director, 112 MacArthur Avenue, Washington, Missouri.

The other is the European Seminar, sponsored annually by the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches. This year the group plans to visit Russia, in addition to England, France, and Germany, leaving New York June 28 and returning on August 7. For information, write to the Reverend Herman F. Reissig, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.



# Pennsylvania Citizens Combat Crime

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and for the rackets! Fraudulent voting, miscarriage of justice, and the infringement of the rights of citizens were common experiences at the scenes of local government at a number of centers in the county.

The *Crusade* took up the task of publicizing the corruption and graft which made local ward healers wealthy at the expense of local citizens, and denied them their constitutional rights. Local law enforcement bodies were either part of the ring, or had been bribed. Most regular channels of bringing offenders to justice were closed. Fear ruled supreme.

At first many newspapers refused to carry favorable stories or comments about the *Crusade*. This was because of "what the boys in power might do to them," by taxation or by "discouraging" their advertising business. But the *Crusade* went on, organizing public meetings, getting a hearing in churches, preparing pamphlets for distribution, and using what press and radio services were available.

## What Results?

In these past five years the *Crusade* cannot claim to have won any sweeping successes. Indeed its slate took a beating in the 1955 elections. Yet definite advances in citizenship concern can be seen. Early in the campaign several vice houses and gambling casinos were closed after raids by state police, and others were driven underground. Open, brazen operations of the racket circuits ceased. But the local political situation, particularly the sanctity of the ballot box, left much to be desired.

Take voting, for example. In the 1952 election, the *Crusade* sent out a pamphlet by mail, return postage guaranteed, to every registered voter in Westmoreland County. 157,000 pamphlets were mailed, and 7,000 of them came back with post office notations "unknown," "dead," or "moved from this vicinity" stamped on the covers.

Following the elections the lists of voters having cast ballots were then checked against the lists the *Crusade* had assembled from their returned and unclaimed mailings. The scandalous evidence of vote fraud was turned over to the office of the United States Attorney General which, in turn, called the Federal Bureau of Investigation to make an investigation. The evidence uncov-

ered by the FBI prompted the United States Department of Justice to call for a Federal Grand Jury indictment. A statement from the Attorney General's office called Westmoreland County the most corrupt in the nation because of the evidence of neglect of law enforcement and of stuffed ballot boxes.

Since the investigation and the subsequent Grand Jury hearings the sanctity of the ballot box has been restored. What was for years the chief weapon and right arm of vice rings and corrupted politicians is again the people's instrument for good government.

Through efforts of *Operation: Crusade* also, several corrupt office holders have been ousted since 1950. One state senator was defeated when he ran for county commissioner in order to assure control of the local government. A district attorney was re-elected by the slim margin of 200 votes. Had the Federal Grand Jury probes been introduced in time to prevent fraudulent voting in that particular election his opponent might have been elected.

An even more encouraging result is that candidates for nomination in the primary election are proving to be of higher caliber. Politics and politicians are no longer words in disrepute.

## The Fight Continues

But the fight is far from over. Clergymen of the county and other public spirited citizens remain on the alert. Newspaper people, like Mrs. Ruth Love, formerly of a nearby Fayette County journal, and Ray Sprigle, of the *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*, continue to dig behind the scenes for new facts, and publicize the misdeeds of public officials.

*Operation: Crusade* is a non-partisan movement, supported entirely by free-will contributions. Unfortunately, due to local conditions, most of the candidates the *Crusade* has supported for major offices in general elections belonged to one party. This, however, has not been the case in the primaries. But a well organized political machine, with fingers in both major parties, is a tough nut to crack! Actually the machine which controlled the ballot box by un-

## IN THIS ISSUE

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*Evelyn Glazier (Mrs. Henry C.) Henzel of Glenside, Pennsylvania is a graduate of Ursinus College and a member of Trinity Church, Philadelphia. Since 1953 she has been chairman of the Christian Social Action department of the Women's Guild of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and since 1954 a member of the Pennsylvania State Legislature. By virtue of her position with the Guild she is a consultant for the Commission on Christian Social Action and will occasionally contribute to CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY.*

derhanded methods completely dominated the nominations of one party and managed to exert a great deal of influence in determining what nominees the other party might name.

*Operation: Crusade* must now accept the task of securing fearless Christian men and women to run for public office, continue to make facts known to the public, and challenge laymen and women to take up the fight. This job is not a simple one. The experience of the years indicates that many church people are still willing to "let George do it," and that many of them neglect their responsibility to vote. It is also true that some church people actively oppose the *Crusade*, as is indicated by the fact that one minister in the area lost his pulpit because some of his laymen did not want him to be so active in the clergy campaign. Others refuse to take up the fight for fear of the repercussions it would have in their own congregations.

Ultimately it is hoped that because a group of private citizens had enough concern to make a stand for decent government, the voters of Westmoreland County will know the kinds of men who are holding and running for public office, the intrigues in which many of these men are involved, and the ceaseless battle Christians must wage to maintain an honest government.

"Show the people the light and they will find the way."



## THERE ARE EVILS TO BE FOUGHT

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sible for about a fifth of all traffic accidents, and which is at the root of many of society's other problems? In most churches there is a spirit of complacency here, even to the point where the subject of alcohol education does not often get into the curriculum for serious consideration.

Many people are aroused, too, by the current rash of juvenile delinquency, so that even government agencies make exhaustive studies of the subject all over the nation. These studies indicate that efforts must be made in our several communities to provide the environment, in home, school and church, where children can develop in full consciousness that they are loved and wanted, and that there is a real purpose in life for them all. When we look at the homes for children, which used to be called "orphanages" we find that the resident children seldom are orphans at all, but the children of broken homes. These children are relatively fortunate, for the "homes" give them a big measure of love and security. But there are many other children who are badly hurt by a society which allows easy divorce, and does not take account of the evils which result when marriage vows are taken lightly.

While it is somewhat easy to get excited about certain obvious evils, there are also more subtle problems which are commonly overlooked. For example, how many church members are deeply concerned about the job discrimination which minority groups frequently face? Relatively few cities and states have FEPC laws to help people of affected groups. And how ready are church groups to lend a hand or voice when the efforts of laboring men to organize for collective bargaining or to improve their economic status are denied? There is a trend toward state "right-to-work" laws

which seriously threaten the gains won by collective bargaining,—and do not guarantee jobs at all!

A militant faith will lead us to examine common practices within our communities, and to "go to war" against those which impede progress toward Christian brotherhood and fair play or interfere with the wholesome development of our children. This militancy expresses itself sometimes at meetings of synods, or at social action workshops, when some one wants to know how to combat the unsocial influences of some comic books and of some radio and TV programs. Questions are asked as to what can be done to eliminate the omnipresent beer and cigarette advertising, in which mellow voiced announcers tell of the merits of this or that brew or smoke. Or someone wants to know where the church stands in regard to FEPC—and other civil rights issues.

### Meeting the Challenge

One of the ways of opposing evil is to give strong, positive support to things which are good. Are we annoyed by offensive movie, TV and radio programs? We can express our objections to sponsors of offending programs, but it might do more good to commend managers of theaters, and radio stations for the constructive shows and programs they provide, and ask for more of the same quality. A brief article in the newsletter of a metropolitan council of church women, entitled "It's up to you," said, in part: "If you want good motion pictures you must support them. A case in point is the delightful *Good Morning, Miss Dove*, which did not draw large enough crowds to last a week."

Another way to fight some evils is through the use of our citizenship responsibility in matters of legislation. Slums probably won't go from our cities until adequate legal provision is made for clearance and for redevelopment, either by private capital, or with government supported housing programs. If the public is to be protected against narcotics peddlers, stringent laws must be set up. If trouble-making comics are to be kept out of the hands of our children laws must be made, controlling their publication, distribution, and sale. And if agents of vice become so powerful as to blind the eyes of law enforcement officials, then Christians must use the political powers they have to change officials.

In all of this, of course, it is important that church people shall proceed with discretion. We must make certain

## ROBERT BRODT DIES

On Saturday, January 14th, the Reverend Robert D. Brodt, pastor of Peace Memorial Church, Chicago, and a valued member of the Commission on Christian Social Action, passed away. His sudden death was due to muscular dystrophy.

Mr. Brodt was elected to the Commission on Christian Social Action by the General Synod of 1950 and throughout his term served as the chairman of its committee on Religion and Public Education. Under his leadership several fruitful conferences of public school leaders associated with the Evangelical and Reformed Church were conducted and an inter-agency committee formed to coordinate the Commission's interests in this field with those of the Board of Christian Education and Publication and our denominational colleges.

Before coming to Peace Memorial Church, he had served as pastor of Salem Church, Allentown, Pennsylvania, and prior to that as denominational Director of Youth Work.



that we are fighting a real evil, not merely some surface manifestation. We must make certain that we have analyzed it sufficiently not to be misled into false or easy answers. We must examine the various alternatives and their implications, so that we give our support to the best solution attainable. And while strategic compromises are an inevitable part of the social process, we have a responsibility not to combat one evil by supporting a greater. We should act without self-righteousness. Nevertheless, we must act.

This issue of *Christian Community* offers two articles that illustrate this struggle on the political level. One of them is by a pastor in Pittsburgh Synod, who brings us up to date on *Operation: Crusade*, a political action effort in which churchmen cooperate in southwestern Pennsylvania. Another is by a member of the Pennsylvania State legislature who has long been concerned with the problems occasioned by crime comics.

There are, of course, other evils and other attempts to deal with them. The battle against evil takes many forms and it is not easily won. But it will be fought continually by those who respond to the challenge of "Onward Christian soldiers, marching as to war."

### Christian Community

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